GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2565
ANSWERED ON:18.03.2008
BAN ON IMPORT OF INDIAN PRODUCE BY RUSSIA
Panda Shri Prabodh;Singh Shri Ganesh

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Russian authority have put a ban on imports of plants/agricultural products like tea, coffee, rice, tobacco etc. from India;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Russian authority have detected Kharpa beetle pest in the Indian consignment of sesame seeds which has landed in Russia;

(d) if so, whether the Union Government has confirmed the report; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to lift the ban?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a): Russia had imposed temporary restrictions on import of plant products from India w.e.f. 28.1.2008. Subsequently, due to the intervention of Government of India, the Russian side has allowed imports of Indian Tea, Coffee, Spices, tobacco and certain categories of vegetables (including onions and mushrooms) falling under specified HS codes of the Russian Federation and entering Russia through the state border points, subject to these products corresponding to the phytosanitary requirements of the Russian Federation, in packages manufactured without use of natural plant fibres.

(b) to (d): As per the Russian authorities, their experts had intercepted 'Khapra' beetle' pest in a consignment of sesame seeds at the State Border point of the Russian Federation (Novorossiysk). The investigation report in respect of the reported consignment has been furnished to the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance(FSVPS) of the Russian Federation. It has been informed that the phytosanitary treatment protocols had been adopted and the fumigation was carried out by an accredited agency in India as per norms and the requirements of FSVPS, and the consignment was therefore free from pests.

e): The matter has been taken up with the Russian side through the Embassy of India, Moscow and has also been raised at higher levels in the bilateral meetings held during the visit of the Russian dignitaries to India on 12-13 February 2008 for early removal of temporary restrictions imposed on all plant products.